11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
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775 bank by the roadside; after a time it rises, walks across the road to the mound, and then vanishes.

The ghost of Major —— is reported to be sometimes seen riding a phantom horse at a spot near Carn, and circles on the grass are pointed out as marking the scene of his equestrian feats; he is also said to ride at times to Bingham Castle.

776 There is a strong belief in fairies, and many people are to be found who say that they have seen them. They are said to dance at night and cause fairy rings; they dwell in grassy mounds and travel from place to place, using stems of the ragweed as horses.

[822] The mirage which is sometimes seen off the coast is ascribed to the fairies if it assumes the appearance of boats or ships; they are believed to have been seen to land on the shore, haul up their boats, and vanish. Many stories are told respecting the impudent pranks of these beings, and to their revenge for some injury, disease in man and cattle is sometimes ascribed. A man may become paralysed or waste away and die from fairy influence as well as from the evil eye, but their malice may have a less serious ending, and may only produce some disfigurement. Some time ago a man was one day walking homewards, when he saw lying on the road a bright new razor; he picked it up and took it home with him, but after shaving [828] with it got *sycosis menti*, and the implement was then declared to be a "fairy razor."

[775] Women dying in puerperal fever are believed to have been taken by the fairies to act as wet-nurses, and infants may be "taken away," and changelings put in their places. The changeling may be got rid of by putting on a roaring fire and throwing him behind it, when he [372] at once vanishes in the smoke. The *ignus fatuus* is believed to be caused by the fairies to lead people astray.

The attentions of these creatures are not expended on human beings alone, for they may revenge themselves on those who vex them by attacking domestic animals. Cattle becoming ill suddenly are supposed to be "shot" by the fairies, and the owners will often go to a great deal of trouble to find a person who possess a "fairy [823] stone," which is the only remedy. These stones are treasured very carefully and are kept wrapped up in a piece of cloth; they are used by rubbing them on the afflicted animal, and repeating a charm or prayer. Unfortunately no specimen of these stones was seen, so it cannot be stated positively whether they are flint arrow-heads or not.

A farm-house at a place called Illaunglass, in the Mullet, has a tale connected with it, illustrating the causing of disease in cattle by

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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centuries of careful observations. I collected 250 of these signs and placed them in the following general categories: density, location, and time of mist; type of frost and heaviness of dew; size and position of rings around sun and moon; color and conformation of sky and clouds at particular times of the day; density and location of fog banks; position and time of rainbows; clarity, closeness, and color of Inis Thiar and the mainland; changes in the weather in relation to tides; actions of animals; and pains in the human body. Of special interest are the signs associated with animal behavior, such as the height at which swallows fly, the prevalence of fly hordes, the crowing of roosters and braying of asses, the position that cats assume at the hearth, and whether or not spiders weave their webs across trails. The expert forecaster will weigh together as many as ten signs before announcing his prediction, and I once collected 16 from an old man in Low Village assessing conditions 12 hours hence. Some signs are quite obviously undependable, among them the quacking of ducks which some say will "call" rain, and the scratching of floors and furniture by cats which, according to others, will point the direction of the wind following a shift in the near future. The folk believe that the moon and tides exert a profound influence on both weather and human behavior; my wife on one occasion was told that her "snappish" mood (the words of a neighbor, not mine) was caused by the new moon.

The climate, in part, determines the conception of seasons held by the islanders. Four seasons are recognized, but their duration deviates from the norm of Western culture. Winter is conceived as embracing only December and January, while spring is thought to commence in February and end in early April. The other two seasons are not so well defined, but most folk agree that summer takes up the greater part of the year—from April until mid-September—and autumn the remaining three months. December and January are regarded as the coldest months, during which time there is a lull in economic activities, but planting begins early in February. Although the prevailing winds during the year are from the west and southwest, for several weeks between January and mid-March icy winds blow steadily from the southeast quarter and cause much physical discomfort and illness. In late March and early April, temperatures rise rapidly, and some islanders believe that March "steals" three days from April so that summer cannot be expected until after April 3rd. The circumstances of the theft are revealed in a legend.

The reason that summer is thought to extend for so long is a psychological one: the folk dislike winter with its cold and dampness and attendant sickness and the sense of isolation from the world that it brings. Few outsiders visit Inis Beag during the winter, and often the steamer is unable to leave port or must turn back because of gales or high seas. It is not out of the ordinary for the island to be totally isolated for a week or ten days because of inclement conditions. From late January on, warm weather is anticipated eagerly, and I was told time and again that summer was imminent when spells of cold and rainy weather occurred between March and June of 1960. During a quarrel with her husband over his confident weather forecasting ability, a woman noted for being an outspoken realist declared, "Inis Beag has only one summer month—July."

The island experiences but eight hours of daylight, from nine o'clock in the morning until five in the afternoon, at the time of the winter solstice, and

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inveterate wrack-boomers. The separateness of Terrace villagers was made most apparent at the time of the shipwreck through the aggression, both overt and covert, directed against them by their fellows.

The behavior of Low villagers, on the other hand, is often the opposite of that of Terrace people less than a mile away; for instance, the folk of Low are the latest risers and milkers, the least industrious, and the most prone to spend time in the pubs. They claim to be descendants of the earliest immigrants in the seventeenth century and are the most boastful of family genealogies. However, most of the landless householders live in Low and as such are held in low repute by landed villagers. People here are the most receptive to tourists, and the two pubs which attract outsiders and the several private homes in which tourists may lodge all are located in Low. It is said that Terrace folk do not need and are indifferent to tourists, whereas Low villagers could not survive without them, either economically or psychologically. Although islanders today visit nearby islands and the mainland less than did their forebears at the turn of the century, the people of Low are considered the most traveled, past and present, of the local population.

As for attitudes directed outward, most islanders regard the culture of Inis Thiar as more traditional than their own. Often heard is the assertion that 70 years ago the inhabitants of the two islands were almost alike as to behavior and beliefs, but the coming of lighthouse and coast guard families, and a permanent curate after 1919, to Inis Beag introduced successive changes which gradually widened the cultural gap between the two. Another factor of importance hindering acculturation in Inis Thiar has been its lack of good landing facilities for visitors to come ashore; the steamer must stand off the jetty of Inis Thiar in the unprotected and often turbulent sound and be met by canoes, whereas it can approach closely the strand of Inis Beag, between the jetty and a point of land, where under most weather conditions it is relatively calm.

Visitors to Inis Beag also hold the same opinion of the two cultures, and the most often made comparison between the islands is the Irish spoken in them. The people of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar recognize slight differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation between the two speech communities, but they seldom rank their respective proficiencies, unless outsiders in one island assert that the Gaelic spoken in the other is "purer." Once a tourist angered visiting Inis Thiar fishermen in my presence by publicly pronouncing that the Irish in Inis Beag is superior, and that he would send his children here to learn Gaelic and then to Inis Thiar to learn English; the tongue-in-check statement was prompted by a discussion of the linguistic skills of the publican in the neighboring island, who is called "the English speaker" because of the rapidity of his speech and chronic misuse of esoteric English words. Indigenous nativists are far more numerous and militant in Inis Thiar than in Inis Beag, and the anger of the fishermen reflected pride in their own culture and their belief that it is more traditional than that of Inis Beag.

Inis Thiar folk are thought by their neighbors to the east to be more industrious and extroverted than themselves. They are believed to rise earlier, work longer and more energetically with fewer breaks for contemplation or gossip with

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Despite sexual repression and the complaints of wives about large families, children are much desired by parents, and the fertility rate in Inis Beag is extremely high. An examination of 109 marriages between 1891 and 1960 reveals that the average number of offspring per couple is 6.4 (7.2 for marriages in which the wife has passed the menopause); this figure excludes spouses who are barren. The range in family size is between 1 and 16 offspring, and 18 of the 109 marriages have produced 7 children—the modal unit. Today, 6 couples are childless and as a result are "pitied" by their neighbors, who hold that it is the females who are sterile. At least 2 women, to my wife's knowledge, have been examined by obstetricians on the mainland and been found fecund; but they have been unable to persuade their spouses of the medical fact or get them to consult the doctors themselves. Men are anxious about their own maleness, as evidenced in the ability to produce offspring in this case, and have an eye to aid in their labors and to descent, succession, and inheritance. Women desire children, in part, to compensate for the lack of attention and affection from their mates.

Most of the enculturation during infancy and childhood in Inis Beag is done by mothers, as men are away much of the time and, if at home, "don't like to mind the kids." Mothers favor their sons, whom they "overprotect" and to whom they give "seductive" care. In the process of childrearing, sexual interest is first elicited and then blocked by punishing its behavioral manifestations. As a result of the mother's close ties to the male child, the father often is alienated from familial interaction, is hostile toward the youth, and fails to become a source of firm masculine attachment. Disliking to fulfill the responsibilities of enculturation and often in conflict with both his wife and male offspring, the father forces his mate to project herself into her role as childrearer to gain solace, and thus the cycle repeats itself. Although fathers tend to favor their daughters, their desire to "escape" the home discourages a pronounced Electra complex from arising. The bond between mother and son is so binding that it is not infrequent for marriage to be postponed after the death of the father, and the son to work the holding for his widowed mother until he has reached the age of confirmed bachelorhood. "This is also the basis for the conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law that is quite intense in Ireland, the prospect of which leads so many sons to refuse 'to bring another woman in on my mother'" (Humphreys 1965:246).

Within marriage, husbands tend to relate themselves to their wives as they have to their mothers when single. The wife is the "strong" person in the household, on whom the husband is emotionally dependent even when their relationship is one of mutual withdrawal and uncooperativeness. In most households, the wife shares at least equally in decision-making, and in many the husband bows to his spouse's decisions, not only in minor matters but in affairs of utmost importance to the family and those relating to activities normally within the male sphere, such as farming. It is the wife who invariably handles the money in the household. Freudians would see the influence of the mother image in the realm of sex: the rarity of conjugal love, the lack of sexual foreplay marked by little or no concern with the female breast, the brevity of the coital act and the frequent spurning of the woman following it, the need to degrade the female in the sexual act, and the

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578 women. They arise largely out of personality clashes and are expressed in gossip
[562] and withdrawal. As in Aughnaboy, none of the disputes between men appear to be based on competition for women, although jealousy of a rival and anger at being rejected have spurred a few disputes involving particular women and couples.
578 One of the important causes of personality conflict in the island is the dogmatism
626 of the folk. They are quick to form opinions, often on the basis of inadequate information, and cling tenaciously to them once they are voiced publicly. Thus, a simple difference of views concerning a topic between two persons can grow into
• [828] a serious altercation lasting a lifetime—and beyond. One facet of this dogmatism is the local belief that the character of a person can be assessed accurately on first
[123] meeting him. I became the victim of a dispute of sorts by telling a man that my "first impressions" of a new acquaintance often are wrong, and that I prefer to interact for some time with the individual before passing judgment on him; this admittance branded me as deficient in character and one to be "withdrawn" from, and I never made it again.

121 I have mentioned that dependence on the guided interview can prevent an
578 observer from gaining insight into disputes among Irish and Inis Beag peasants;
181 this is so because dysfunctional social relations are kept carefully hidden from outsiders—the conscious models concerning disputes not only are incorporated into the self-image of the islanders but are urged on strangers. The concern for kin, acquaintances, and particular groups manifested in speech and behavior, which at times can be most sentimental, cannot be taken at face value. The emigrating relative whose departure provokes tears on the strand may be forgotten quickly, and his absence even heralded, in the privacy of the home, and the mourners at a graveside may include many who display indifference when thought to be unobserved while kneeling in the rear ranks. This state of affairs gives rise to a brief consideration of the problems associated with procuring reliable data.

114 Honor Tracy, in the first chapter (aptly entitled "Forebodings") of her book, *Mind You I've Said Nothing*, humorously predicts the various reactions that her volume will stimulate in Irish readers She concludes with the following statement about the difficulties surrounding fact-finding in Ireland:

> 114 181 This question of fact was another of the spectres hovering in my path. In every book there should be a fact here and there of the writer is charged with aimless frivolity. But facts in Ireland are very peculiar things. They are rarely allowed to spoil the sweep and flow of conversation: the crabbing effect they have on good talk is eliminated almost entirely. I do not believe myself that the Irishman conveniently ignores their existence, as sometimes is said, so much as that he is blithely unaware of it. He soars above their uninviting surfaces on the wing of his fancy. Who then would answer my questions truthfully, who would supply me with that modicum of sober and accurate information required to give my book a serious air? No one, as far as I knew. And if facts are elusive and shadowy things in Ireland, opinions are more so. An Irishman . . . will say not what he thinks but what he believes you would like him to think; he is a man of honeyed words, anxious to flatter and soothe, cajole and caress . . . [He does not] reveal his own true thoughts if, to be sure, he has any. He would be in dread lest you quoted him and the story went around and he got the name of a bold outspoken fellow, which might be bad for business. And then again so many Irishmen find an innocent glee in misleading and deceiving for its own sake.

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779 The islanders know little of church dogma and the purport of rituals and feast days. What knowledge they do possess often is distorted, and they seldom read the Bible or manuals of instruction or engage in doctrinal discussions among themselves. I discovered by consulting priests and church histories, dictionaries, and exegeses—both before and during my stay in Inis Beag—that I came to know far more about the faith than any of the folk, and I sometimes imparted what I had learned to the curious in homes and even in the pubs. Instruction is welcomed by the islanders, but they dislike criticism from any quarter of their idiosyncratic Catholic observances, pagan retentions and reinterpretations, and non-Christian behavior. They also dislike being told, especially by returned emigrants, that "Catholic culture" in Ireland is quite unlike that in other parts of the world and arouses dismay and even incredulity in many foreign Catholics who visit Ireland.

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771 The paths to salvation, according to the islanders, are threefold: obeying
793 the curate, performing the rituals of the church diligently and punctiliously, and
776 conforming to the moral laws of Christianity. Being saved, however, is to them
165 much more a matter of escaping Hell than of achieving Purgatory and eventually Heaven, and they experience more anxiety about failing to conform to the moral laws than pride in conforming to them. Furthermore, it is sins of thought rather than sins of deed which preoccupy them. While they boast of their morality as expressed in behavior, they labor under a heavy burden of guilt arising out of repressed sexual desires, jealousy and envy of their neighbors, and anti-clerical sentiment, among other attitudes. It is difficult for most of them to confess these to the priest, and thus their feelings of guilt and fear of damnation are compounded. Many times in Inis Beag I heard a "good Catholic" defined as one who "thinks mostly of death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell" and guides his conduct accordingly. Life on earth is regarded as merely a brief prelude to the "eternity stretching beyond the grave," to be lived only in preparation for the Day of Judgment and borne patiently in all its "pain and suffering." Priests and nuns are envied for many reasons, among them the fact that they can "spend most of their time preparing for death" and thus are in a better position to achieve salvation.

771 It is apparent to outside observers and to the folk alike that women are
562 more pious than men. They attend church more regularly, are more serious of
[829] mien at mass and during other religious observances, and are more prone to talk
[788] of religious matters than men. Many women go to mass daily, and it is said that all of the women of the island, but only ten men, have evaded going to Hell magically by attending mass nine Fridays in succession after Ash Wednesday (or, according to some, the first Friday in each month for nine successive months, or
[154] the first Friday after Ash Wednesday for nine years in succession). The reasons for this are several, but the most important are that women are less contented than men and thus have a greater need for the solace that religion affords, and they are more restricted socially than men and by fulfilling various church obligations can escape household confinement and interact with other women. Some
771 • 828 islanders are thought to be overly pious—"wear their religion on their sleeves"—and are subjects of amusement and derision; those who use piety to cloak avarice

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and other Christian vices are detested and are likely to become the butt of satirical anecdotes and ballads.

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In many primitive and peasant societies, in which Christianity has dispossessed polytheistic religions, it has been observed that polytheism has left a legacy whereby the Virgin Mary and various angels and saints are worshipped as dispensers of personal power in their own right. This has been extended to the Trinity among the Anang of Nigeria, who believe that God provided independent power for his human son, Jesus, with which to convert the world to Christianity, and for the Holy Spirit (who has joined the indigenous pantheon of spirits) to act for mankind as healer, prognosticator, forgiver of sins, and protector against ghosts, witches, and sorcerers (Messenger 1959:291). Most Inis Beag folk regard God and the Devil, among Christian supernatural beings, as the only possessors of personal power. But some think that power emanating from the deity is manipulated by the Blessed Virgin and particular saints, and they as well as he must be propitiated for best results. When asked why she prayed to St. Enda rather than to other saints, an old woman said that this saint is "nearer to God" and therefore able to capture more of his power than others. A few islanders hold that these intermediary entities possess power not emanating from the deity, and thus may be approached individually through prayer and sacrifice for their favor. The saints most often appeased are St. Patrick, St. Brigid, St. Enda, and the patron saint of the island.

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The Devil is thought to command power for evil as great as or greater than that of the Virgin Mary and the saints for good. Some believe that he controls malevolent pagan beings as well as his own minions from Hell, and he both tempts Christians to sin and attacks them bodily causing sickness, injury, and other misfortunes. He is abroad at all times, although his power is amplified on such occasions as Allhallows' Eve, and sometimes he can be seen by human eyes—as a huge, dark, indistinct figure standing at a distance, usually after nightfall or when it is raining heavily. One evening during a severe storm, I visited without advance notice a man milking his cow at the back of the island, and he would not approach me as I stood atop a fence wearing oilskin and sou'wester until I called out to him and established the fact that I was not the "big fellow" come to do him harm. Animals are especially sensitive to the presence of Satan, and asses which run about braying loudly are believed to have seen him.

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The folk do not admit to dissent or skepticism as regards their Catholic faith, despite their anti-clerical attitudes, but skepticism can be inferred from many of their utterances. Most doubt centers around the reality of the hereafter and its nature, if it exists. Invariably when I talked of religion with them, whether singly or in groups, my own views of the afterworld were solicited eagerly, and such remarks as the following, pronounced with anxiety, were forthcoming from them: "Is there really a life after death?", "Will we meet relatives there?", "Is it bodies or souls that live in Heaven?", "If we all meet in Heaven, won't it be too crowded?", "How could God be so cruel as to put people in a big fire?", and "Sure, no one has ever returned to tell of the afterlife." The most public expression of skepticism that my wife and I encountered was in a pub when she was requested to sing "Galway Bay" before a crowd of boisterous men; after she sang the line, "And if

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times are recognized as recently deceased islanders, but more often they are "strangers" from another generation or another region of Ireland. They appear and disappear without warning and travel silently singly or in small groups. Usually they pay little or no heed to the living who chance to observe them, but they will attack those who have wronged them and occasionally others for seemingly no reason. A man told me of being beaten severely by three unknown men, obviously shades, early one evening at the back of the island; he might have been killed but for the intervention of two women, also strangers to him. At one time, persons who feared being assaulted by vengeful or capricious ghosts carried coals to protect themselves. The folk believe that shades are souls of the dead in Purgatory, which embraces the earth as well as a spiritual locus. While on earth, they do [783]
penance by laboring at economic tasks—carrying seaweed, planting gardens, and fishing—near their former homes, and the work that they accomplish is undone once they disappear.

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Christianity touches on the evil eye in more ways than providing the magical incantation, "God bless you.", which automatically opposes the power of God to that of the witch. Many islanders explain the evil eye by positing the presence of both the deity and the Devil in each human body. God rests on the right side and urges a person to do good deeds, while Satan rests on the left and tempts him to commit sins. In most individuals, the deity dominates the body much of the time, but in the case of one with the evil eye, the Devil somehow has gained perpetual ascendancy and transmits his destructive power through the left eye of the person. It is the constant flowing of malignant power from within which causes the disfigurement in or near the left eye of the witch. The association [822]
of evil with the left is a phenomenon widely distributed among the peoples of the world, as is the linking of evil with black. Ghost masks are painted black to [171]
symbolize their evil nature by the Anang of Nigeria, and sacrifices to deity and ancestors at shrines are made with the right hand, and to ghosts, witches, and the spirit of sorcery with the left. In Inis Beag, people who have swarthy skin, black 826
hair, and brown eyes, although not considered witches, are thought to possess evil 828
power of some sort and are to be avoided. A curate possessing these physical traits 754
who served in the island recently was mistrusted and shunned whenever possible [793]
even though "a man chosen by God Almighty." An interesting conjecture is how successful would be the research in Inis Beag of an anthropologist with dark complexion and hair and a cast in his brown left eye.

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The afterworld of the Celts, known as the Isle of the Blest or the Land of Youth, lay to the west of Ireland. It has been sighted by a few fortunate Inis Beag fishermen, either low-lying on the horizon with lights sparkling when it has risen from the sea, as it does periodically, or in the ocean deeps with the spires of its buildings and their tolling bells near the surface. This is a forested land inhabited by souls of the dead, and by fairies who travel to and from the mainland in "fairy ships." Few islanders now syncretize the Isle of the Blest with the Christian Heaven, as was common a century ago, but there are those who claim to have seen fairy ships from there skirt Inis Beag headed for the mainland. These are masted schooners carrying lights with no signs of life on their decks, which heave into sight and vanish instantaneously and can move far more swiftly than their counter-

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831 be herded outside; even then the adults were so embarrassed by the term that they
855 found it difficult to communicate with her. One steamer day she aroused stupefaction among a group of men on the strand when she tried—unsuccessfully—to identify the gender of a bullock about to be shipped off.

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864 Lack of sexual knowledge and the prevalence of misconceptions about sex combine to brand Inis Beag one of the most sexually naive of the world's societies. Only three mothers admitted giving sexual instructions, briefly and incompletely, to their daughters. It is said that boys are better advised than girls, but that the former learn about sex informally from older boys and men, and from observing animals covertly. Most islanders who were questioned about how sexual knowledge is imparted to youths expressed the belief that "after marriage, nature takes its course," thus negating the need for anxiety creating confrontations of parents and offspring. I was unable to discover any cases of childlessness in Inis Beag based on sexual ignorance of spouses, as have been reported from other regions of peasant Ireland.

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886 Menstruation and the menopause arouse profound misgivings among
[123] women of the island, because few of them comprehend their physiological significance. My wife was called on by perplexed women to explain these processes more than any other phenomena related to sex. When they reach puberty, most girls are unprepared for the first menstrual flow and find the experience a traumatic one, especially when their mothers are unwilling or unable to explain it satisfactorily.
886 It is commonly believed that the menopause can induce insanity; in order to ward
828 it off, some women have retired from life in their mid-forties and, in at least three contemporary cases, have confined themselves to bed until death years later. Yet the harbingers of "madness" are simply the physical symptoms announcing the menopause, which in Inis Beag include migraine headaches, hot flashes, faintness in crowds and enclosed places, and severe anxiety. Sometimes women who have not yet reached the menopause or have passed it and who fear becoming mentally ill from other causes will experience these symptoms in their anticipatory role playing.

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[743] As to sexual misconceptions, the folk share with most Western peoples the belief that men by nature are far more sexually disposed than women. The latter are informed by the curate and in the home that sexual relations with their husbands are a "duty" which must be "endured," for to refuse coitus is a mortal
[832] sin. Women frequently affix the guilt for male libidinal strivings on the enormous intake of potatoes by their spouses (Among the Anang of Nigeria, men fear the excessive sexual demands of their wives and place the blame on clitoridectomy.). Asked to compare the sexual proclivities of Inis Beag men and women, one woman said, "Men can wait a long time for 'it,' but we can wait a lot longer." There is much evidence to indicate that the female orgasm is unknown or not experienced (or considered a deviant response not to be divulged). A middle-aged bachelor, who considers himself wise in the ways of the outside world and has a reputation for making love to willing tourists during the summer, described the violent bodily reactions of a girl to his fondling and asked for an explanation; when told the "facts of life," he admitted not knowing that women also could achieve climax, although he was aware that some of them apparently enjoyed lovemaking. Inis Beag men

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181 and the never ending toil needed to maintain present subsistence standards; the
152 spying and malicious gossiping of their fellows and the ubiquity of jealousy and
[562] envy; the isolation of the island, particularly during winter months; numbing boredom and the dearth of social activities; for women, the lack of freedom and of attention and affection from their spouses, as well as the necessity of enduring
• 828 sexual relations; and, as stated above, hypochondria. Much has been written about
829 isolation and its depressive effects on the islanders, and the folk themselves con-
[184] stantly complain of being shut off from the world and prey to wind, rain, fog, and raging sea. But isolation need not lead inevitably to depression, for my wife and I conducted research in another island of Ireland—far distant from and even more inaccessible than Inis Beag—where the inhabitants do not feel isolated and are not depressed.

121 I have expanded the clinical usage of the term hypochondria to include fears of the spirit as well as fears of the body, for ill health can as often be induced by supernatural forces, and death—whether by disease, injury, or aging—is the
164 ultimate fear with its threat of eternal damnation. Colds, influenza, dyspepsia, migraine headaches, teeth decay, the crippling effects of joint and muscle ailments,
[168] hypermetrophy, and mental illness are paramount among health concerns. "Flu" epidemics are frequent in the island and are a chief cause of death among people
[887] who have become weakened by old age. As the folk advance in years, they come to spend more time in bed and by the turf fire and venture out less during the winter
[751] and when it rains. Drafts are avoided whenever possible, and clothes dampened by seas which wash the canoes or by rain are changed for dry ones at the first oppor-
[757] tunity. Colds, flu, indigestion, and headaches more than any other afflictions send
[753] the islanders to the nurse for drugs and to their own folk remedies for relief. Dyspepsia is known as "wind" and is thought to result from diet, but the nurses say that most cases of indigestion are the result of tension—"nervous stomach." Nine cases of migraine were reported in Inis Beag during 1959, but many other islanders, most of whom are women, suffer from "nervous headache" which can
[123] approach migraine in intensity of pain. Neither my wife nor I were ill during the
[767] winter of 1959 and 1960, even though we were abroad in all sorts of inclement weather against the advice of our neighbors; when we began picking wild garlic to season our food, it was reasoned that the condiment afforded us protection against the flu, which reached almost epidemic proportions that year, and as a result this folk medicine was used more widely and consistently than usual.

[114] Nativists and primitivists praise the health and hardiness of the folk and boast of the absence of rheumatism and allied infirmities among them and the sharpness of their sight. But, just as most adults past 30 years of age suffer from decay and loss of teeth, they also suffer from muscle and joint ailments, caused by the "damp and cold," and from far-sightedness. It is not known how many folk wear glasses in the privacy of their homes, but only two persons, both men, wear them publicly—and self-consciously when they do. Most glasses are not prescription made but are purchased in mainland shops after many pairs displayed on the counters have been tested, and often a single pair will serve the needs of all the
[829] elders of a household. The islanders among themselves constantly complain of these
668 and other ailments, although some will praise the health and hardiness of the local

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population in the presence of strangers, to conform to the nativistic and primitivistic stereotype. Probably the most robust of the two dozen islanders past the age of 70 years believes that he will live to be 100 years old because he continues to be active physically and doesn't "worry about the health." he accuses his fellows of "worrying themselves into the grave" over matters of body and soul.

The etiology of mental illness as conceived by the islanders is varied and embraces both natural and spiritual realms. "Insanity" stigmatizes the victim and his family, often for many generations, no matter what its cause, and as many psychotics are treated at home—hidden from the probing eyes of strangers—as are incarcerated in the mental institution serving the region of which Inis Beag is a part. Statistics on mental disorders are hard to come by because of the opprobrium attached to insanity, but at least eight of the folk were institutionalized for various periods between 1940 and 1965. Only one of these is a woman and none were violent prior to admission. Inheritance, inbreeding, and the menopause are the natural causes most widely accepted by the islanders, but some claim that heavy blows to the head, acute alcoholism, and even prolonged emotional tension—or "nerves"—can induce insanity. In explaining why a former Inis Beag curate was committed to a mental institution, an old man revealed what is probably the most significant cause of mental illness in Ireland when he said that the constant association of the priest with a pretty housekeeper "drove him mad from frustration;" he advocated that only elderly, plain-appearing women (who will not "gab" everything that they know to "our man") be hired for the task.

Supernatural forces are believed capable of causing not only mental illness, but most other maladies and injuries as well. Pagan dispensers of ill health are vengeful or capricious fairies, ghosts, and witches of the evil eye, while Catholicism provides an unpredictable Devil, a deity who punishes sinful thoughts and deeds in this world as well as in the next, and priests who in Inis Beag often have interpreted the boundaries of sin according to Irish and personal criteria. In the case of certain folk stricken with mental disorders, I have heard specific causes put forth to account for their condition: parents who are second cousins, the evil eye of a neighbor, punishment by God for a particular misdeed, and a priest's curse. A man who mistreated his aged bachelor uncle before his recent death now is haunted with the specter of being struck down from the grave with sickness, injury, or madness by the shade of the uncle seeking revenge. His despair and erratic behavior arouse little sympathy from his fellows, who await the day of reckoning. The stigma of mental illness arises from its designation as inheritable or a sign of the deity's displeasure, both of which may doom those of generations to come. There is a strong suspicion among the folk that other maladies which are deforming or leave physical aftereffects once cured can be transmitted through inheritance. In this category are two mongoloids, one dwarf, one epileptic, one person with goiter, one with a cleft palate, and one who has recovered from poliomyelitis. These disabilities also can stigmatize a family.

Probably the most infamous custom associated with the Irish is their excessive intake of intoxicating drink, and certainly Inis Beag islanders are no exception to the stereotype. Men drink far more than women, but even though the latter widely condemn the practice many are known to send their children to the pubs

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women in the island and are attracted by what they consider to be a more rewarding life on the mainland and abroad, and so emigrate for these reasons. One of the most "pitied" girls in the island is a returned emigrant to the United States, who, despite being 24 years of age and suitable for marriage in every way, is not being courted, although it is known that she came back to Inis Beag to obtain a husband.

All of the conditions making for personality depression—the intrusion of priests into secular affairs, hypochondria, malicious gossiping, poverty, boredom, and isolation—also instigate emigration. My analysis assigns the secular excesses of the clergy and their implementation of the Jansenist doctrines of the Catholic Church in Ireland as the primary push factors in emigration and supports the contention made by Paul Blanshard that, "When all the reasons for a flight from Ireland have been mentioned, there still remains a suspicion that Irish young people are leaving their nation largely because it is a poor place in which to be happy and free. Have the priests created a civilization in which the chief values of youth and love are subordinate to Catholic discipline?" (Blanshard 1954:154). What "remains a suspicion" to Blanshard as regards all of Ireland is very much a reality in Inis Beag.

Other internal factors accounting for emigration which are considered important by the folk are the deadening of initiative by government services and subsidies and the institutionalization of emigration itself. While many islanders believe that the government ought to support even further the local economy in order to combat emigration, others feel that its present level of benevolence has had a deleterious effect on their character. Young people observing the indolence of their elders, according to this opinion, are shamed into seeking a more active life away from Inis Beag. In my estimation, this is a superficial cause, but the institutionalization of emigration is a vital factor, more recognized by youth than by their parents. Just as in the case of late marriage, emigration since famine times gradually has become an expectation—a "way of life"—and it will stimulate some folk to leave even though, in the estimation of their fellows, it might be advantageous for them to remain. When a young man says that he has an "itch to go to England and work for a spell," he usually is being motivated in this manner.

Among the external causes of emigration, the most significant are the growth of prosperity on the mainland and abroad, the influence of ever increasing numbers of tourists who visit and returned emigrants who come for short stays or to retire in Inis Beag, the impact of the mass media of communication, and the increasing availability of scholarship funds for children to attend secondary schools on the mainland. The United States has been a land of freedom, opportunity, and prosperity to the Irish since the early seventeenth century, but particularly during and after the famine (Approximately 1,000,000 Irish emigrated between 1846 and 1851, and another 1,500,000 perished from hunger, according to Woodham-Smith 1962:411.). The first record of substantial emigration from Inis Beag is in 1822, and from that time until the Second World War most islanders migrated to the United States, never to return. However, with the growth of prosperity in England after 1946, the stream of emigration shifted in that direction. Not only did jobs become plentiful across the Irish Sea then, but large, viable ethnic communities served by Irish clergy had sprung up in the larger cities. It became possi-

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the world's societies. Sex never is discussed in the home when children are about; only three mothers admitted giving advice, briefly and incompletely, to their daughters. We were told that boys are better advised than girls, but that the former learn about sex informally from older boys and men and from observing animals. Most respondents who were questioned about sexual instructions given to youths expressed the belief that "after marriage nature takes its course," thus negating the need for anxiety-creating and embarrassing personal confrontation of parents and offspring. We were unable to discover any cases of childlessness based on sexual ignorance of spouses, as reported from other regions of peasant Ireland. Also, we were unable to discover knowledge of the sexual categories utilized by researchers in sex: insertion of tongue while kissing, male mouth on female breast, female hand on penis, cunnilingus, fellatio, femoral coitus, anal coitus, extramarital coitus, manifest homosexuality, sexual contact with animals, fetishism, and sado-masochistic behavior. Some of these activities may be practiced by particular individuals and couples; however, without a doubt they are deviant forms in Inis Beag, about which information is difficult to come by.

Menstruation and menopause arouse profound misgivings among women of the island, because few of them comprehend their physiological significance. My wife was called on to explain these processes more than any other phenomena related to sex. When they reach puberty, most girls are unprepared for the first menstrual flow and find the experience a traumatic one—especially when their mothers are unable to provide a satisfactory explanation for it. And it is commonly believed that the menopause can induce "madness"; in order to ward off this condition, some women have retired from life in their mid-forties and, in a few cases, have confined themselves to bed until death, years later. Others have so retired as a result of depressive and masochistic states. Yet the harbingers of "insanity" are simply the physical symptoms announcing the onset of menopause. In Inis Beag, these include severe headaches, hot flashes, faintness in crowds and enclosed places, and severe anxiety. Mental illness is also held to be inherited or caused by inbreeding (or by the Devil, by God punishing a sinner, or by malignant pagan beings) and stigmatizes the family of the afflicted. One old man came close to revealing what is probably the major cause of neuroses and psychoses in Ireland, when he explained the incarceration of an Inis Beag curate in a mental institution for clerics as caused by his constant association with a pretty housekeeper, who "drove him mad from frustration." This elder advocated that only plain-appearing older women (who would not "gab"

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to "our man") be chosen for the task. Earlier, according to island opinion, the same priest had caused to be committed to the "madhouse" a local man who publicly challenged certain of his actions. The unfortunate man was released six months later, as per law, since he was not mentally ill. 828 •

Sexual misconceptions are myriad in Inis Beag. The islanders share with most Western peoples the belief that men by nature are far more libidinous than women. The latter have been taught by some curates and in the home that sexual relations with their husbands are a "duty" which must be "endured," for to refuse coitus is a mortal sin. A frequently encountered assertion affixes the guilt for male sexual strivings on the enormous intake of potatoes of the Inis Beag male. (In Nigeria, among the people whom my wife and I studied, women are thought to be more sexually disposed than men and are the repositories of sexual knowledge; it is they who initiate coitus and so pose a threat to their spouses. Nigerian men place the blame on clitoridectomy performed just prior to marriage.) Asked to compare the sexual proclivities of Inis Beag men and women, one mother of nine said, "Men can wait a long time before wanting 'it,' but we can wait a lot longer." There is much evidence to indicate that the female orgasm is unknown—or at least doubted, or considered a deviant response. One middle-aged bachelor, who considers himself wise in the ways of the outside world and has a reputation for making love to willing tourists, described one girl's violent bodily reactions to his fondling and asked for an explanation; when told the "facts of life" of what obviously was an orgasm, he admitted not realizing that women also could achieve a climax, although he was aware that some of them apparently enjoyed kissing and being handled. 831* 833 [771] [864] [824] [171]

Inis Beag men feel that sexual intercourse is debilitating, a common belief in primitive and folk societies. They will desist from sex the night before they are to perform a job which will require the expenditure of great energy. Women are not approached sexually during menstruation or for months after childbirth, since they are considered "dangerous" to the male at these times. Returned "Yanks" have been denounced from the pulpit for describing American sexual practices to island youths, and such "pornographic" magazines as *Time* and *Life*, mailed by kin from abroad, have aroused curates to spirited sermon and instruction. 831* 834 [841] 831* 177 771 864 831*

The separation of the sexes, started within the family, is augmented by separation in almost all segments of adolescent and adult activity. Boys and girls are separated to some extent in classrooms, and completely in 562 834 [858] [864]

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identification, varying in a continuum from repressed and latent homosexual balances through to added displacements and distortions that are either pallid asexuality or fearful and bizarre misidentifications. Since the culture does not condone sexual expression or postpones and then rigidly defines it in marriage . . . latent homosexual balances [were hypothesized] for this group, no overtly sought interpersonal manifestations, and a facade of asexual misogyny varied only by the most personalized and bizarre female identifications. . . . [The] basic personality has stamped into it such feelings as male inadequacy, the masculine protest, hostility toward females, and the kind of latent homosexual feelings which produce a further sense of sin and guilt (Opler and Singer 1956: 15–18).

Among the seven diagnostic variables utilized by the researchers, the Irish patients ranked highest in the "Sin, Sex, and Guilt Ideology" (93 percent of the sample) and "Homosexuality Types" (90 percent of the sample latent, none overt) categories.

Complementing the Oedipus complex in the etiology of sexual puritanism is male solidarity. It has a long history in Ireland—revealed in legend and modern literature alike—and is instrumental in delaying marriage and making for marital maladjustment. Freudian psychologists see it as one of the many possible by-products of the "universal" Oedipus complex—"male inadequacy, the masculine protest, hostility toward females, and . . . latent homosexual feelings"; but many anthropologists (especially structural-functionalists) analyze it as a sociocultural phenomenon, for it is found in societies in which the Oedipal configuration appears not to exist. Elizabeth Coxhead, in discussing Lady Gregory's play, *Grania*, alludes to the tragic plight of most Irish women, past and present.

Grania is . . . a play in which a woman is ousted from an emotional relationship between two men. The "love" is that of man for man, of brother for brother; it is loyalty to the warrior band, and a corresponding resentment of the woman who takes away the warrior's freedom, makes trouble with his comrades, distracts him from his purpose in life. It is an attitude which filters through the play as light filters through crystal; which runs through the heroic Irish sagas. . . . Its continuing validity was borne out by all Lady Gregory had observed in the world around her, the world of the "loveless Irishman," the peasant society which relegated women to serfdom, the middle-class intellectual society which left them only donkey-work. . . . such a view of the Irishwoman's role, of her relegation to insignificance and her resentment under it, is not exclusively feminine. It is abundantly confirmed by Synge. His heroines . . . are creatures caged and raging, given no scope for their powers, condemned to love men who are poor things

beside them and do not really care for them at all. O'Casey's Juno offers further positive support, and on the negative side, so to speak, are the quantities of second-rate Irish plays and stories that have for their mainspring a panic dislike of women, invariably represented as shrews, hussies, and Aunt Sallies at whom anything can be thrown. A woman has only to put her nose into a saloon bar . . . to realise that Almhuin is with us still (Coxhead 1961: 145–146).

In concluding this section, I would like to mention briefly an ingenious hypothesis of the cause of sexual repression in Ireland, presented by Sean de Freine in *The Great Silence*. His book is the most "convincing" expression to date of what linguists (outside of Ireland) term "language determinism," a monism still popular in that country a century after the advent of the Irish nativistic movement. Displaying a lack of knowledge both of contemporary linguistic theory and of sexual ethics in the "heart of the Gaeltacht," de Freine says:

> The Irish are often accused of a Jansenist approach to sex, which is supposed to date from the French influence in the Irish Church in and just after the penal times. But this attitude did not exist in Irish Ireland and does not exist in the Gaeltacht today. It would seem as though, when English spread throughout the country, it was English Puritanism and not French Jansenism, which brought about the change. For example, certain English words with prudish connotations were accepted, with their connotations, by the Irish, while their equivalents in Irish have no such nuances. In its English setting Puritanism was kept in reasonable check by the other native traditions: In Ireland, as the old culture died, there were no such natural checks to contain it (de Freine 1966: 164).

Space does not permit me to consider other causal factors listed earlier which are equally untenable.

SEXUAL REPRESSION: ITS INCULCATION

The inculcation of sexual puritanism in Inis Beag must be examined in four contexts: the role of the curate, the influence of visiting missions, enculturation in the home, and what I will term "secular social control" —the behavioral regulations imposed on themselves by Inis Beag adoles-